

Utah Statewide Mercury Workgroup

Meeting Summary of - May 9, 2006 Meeting

Agenda Overview

1. Introduction
2. Review of February 8, 2006 Meeting Minutes
3. Jason Walker, representing Utah Tribal Interests was affirmed as a new member of the Mercury workgroup
4. 2006 Workgroup goals, Jennifer Cummings as Facilitator
5. Presentation by Coleen Crips, Nevada Division of Environmental Protection, on Nevada Mercury Air Emission Control Program
6. Status of Fish Tissue Monitoring and Proposed Sample Locations for 2006/2007
7. Presentation by Jason Scholl, Utah Department of Health, on Process for Developing of Fish Consumption Advisories.
8. Presentation by EG&G, on Mercury Emissions from Mustard Gas Incineration
9. Next Meeting will be held at the Department of Environmental Quality Building on Thursday September 28, 2006 at 9:00 AM
10. Proposed Agenda Items for September 28, 2006 meeting.

May 9, 2006 Meeting Summary

1. Introduction: John Whitehead of DEQ Division of Water Quality, welcomed all in attendance. Everyone, including the stakeholders and audience, introduced themselves and their position.

2. Review of Minutes: John Whitehead asked the workgroup if there were questions or comments concerning the February 8, 2006 Meeting Minutes. Jeff Salt of the Great Salt Lake Keeper had corrections. The workgroup decided that an e-mail with the corrections would suffice.

3. New Mercury Workgroup Member: A motion was passed by the Workgroup to include Jason Walker of the Northwestern Band of the Shoshone Nation who also represents Utah Tribal interests, to become a member of the Utah Statewide Mercury Workgroup.

4. 2006 Workgroup Goals, Jennifer Cummings as Facilitator: A thorough discussion of workgroup goals was synthesized into the following list,

- Specify Human Risks and Identify Target and Objectives
- Source Delineation
- Source minimization
- Current Mercury Levels
- Consistency in Sampling

- Common Databank
- Geographic Designation
- Data Extrapolation or Interpretation Modeling
- Identify economic and consumer Impacts
- Define Program
- Find Funding
- Interstate Coordination

Comments from the Workgroup to devise the list are as follows;

John Whitehead, DEQ DWQ, Need to address sources

Tim Wagner, Sierra Club, Determine sources and devise a list of recommendations to the public to minimize exposure

Jeff Salt, Great Salt Lake Keeper, Develop ecosystem watershed model to pinpoint and quantify local sources, loads, fate, and transport of Mercury.

Cheryl Heying, Division of Air Quality, Primary goal is human health and to minimize risk before the quantification phase of the workgroup.

John Whitehead, DEQ DWQ, Need continued fish tissue sampling to target watershed areas

Scott Everett, DEQ DERR, Need consistent agency protocols for sampling

David Naftz, USGS, Need data availability

Paul Dreman, Trout Unlimited, Need a common geographic designation

Wayne Ball, Utah DOH, Determine if there is cross species correlation in similar habitats or locations

Scott Everett, DEQ DERR, Address both ecological and human health risks

Cheryl Heying, Division of Air Quality, Priority is to minimize human health risks. Need to understand and communicate these risks.

Wayne Ball, Utah DOH, The DOH is currently identifying water bodies that contain fish with Mercury levels that exceed the EPA standards and posting fish and duck advisories for safe consumption.

Jeff Salt, Great Salt Lake Keeper, Address the mercury levels in consumer products and address the economic impacts to those watersheds that have advisories, particularly hunting and fishing interests.

Paul Dreman, Trout Unlimited, Need an Overall Program Mission Statement and the sources of future funding

John Whitehead, DEQ DWQ, The role of the workgroup is as an advisory and coordinating resource, other agencies are responsible in case of a major incident.

Cheryl Heying, Division of Air Quality, Answering an audience question concerning other sources of Mercury such as light bulbs and switches, both anthropogenic and natural sources of Mercury will be included in the source delineation phase.

Sue Odekirk, PacifiCorp, Identify significant risks then specify targets.

Jeff Salt, Great Salt Lake Keeper, More time is needed to address the primary workgroup goals, suggested an interim meeting.

John Whitehead, DEQ DWQ, Conduct an e-mail discussion to prioritize goals and then decide on an interim meeting time and location

5. Presentation by Coleen Crips, Nevada Division of Environmental Protection, on Nevada Mercury Air Emission Control Program

Coleen Crips from the Nevada Division of Environmental Protection gave a presentation on the Nevada Mercury Air Emission Control Program. A brief summary will be provided below and the presentation is posted at this web address:

http://www.deq.utah.gov/Issues/Mercury/docs/050906_Nevada_Mercury_Air_Emission_Control_Program.pdf

The Voluntary Reduction Program began in 2000 after the EPA determined in the Toxic Release Inventory that 90% of airborne Mercury originating in the United States was emitted from four gold mining operations in Northern Nevada. These four facilities installed the Maximum Achievable Control Technology (MACT) and reduction of emissions resulted in a 50% decrease in 2002, 74% decrease in 2003, and an 82% decrease in 2004. Through a series of stakeholder meetings and drafts, the Nevada Mercury Control Program (NMCP) began on November 18th, 2005. The NMCP is a regulatory permitting program and includes all Nevada mining operations. It is a three tiered program and is conducted in 2 phases. Tier 1, and Tier 2 operations require a Mercury permit and must go through the Phase 2 Nevada MACT process. Tier 3 facilities require a minor operations permit that is updated annually. All new and modified operations go directly to the Phase 2. All permits require record keeping, and operations and maintenance.

Comments from the Workgroup:

Jeff Salt, Great Salt Lake Keeper, asked if the timelines were consistent between the life of the mining operation and the permit. The response from NEP was that due to the price of Gold and Silver, they figure that the mining operations will continue for 20 years or more, well beyond the regulatory window of Tier 2 operations.

6. Status of Fish Tissue Monitoring and Proposed Sample Locations for 2006/2007:

John Whitehead summarized the fish tissue monitoring efforts to date and provided a map of sampling locations and fish advisories. Working with Walt Donaldson, DWR, a list was compiled of potential sampling locations for 2006-2007. The workgroup was asked to review the list, focusing on the locations and direction of the efforts. He also informed the workgroup that Dianne Nielson, director of the Utah DEQ was to address the Legislative Interim Committee regarding Utah's Mercury issues in May.

7. Presentation by Jason Scholl, Utah Department of Health, on Methods of Generation of Fish Consumption Advisories

Jason Schull, DOH, gave a presentation on the methods used to determine the maximum consumption rate in meals per month of fish containing mercury, for both adults and children, provided in the fish advisories. The presentation is posted at this web address and contains the calculations:

http://www.deq.utah.gov/Issues/Mercury/docs/050906_Methods_for_Generation_of_a_Fish_Consumption_Advisory.pdf

Comments from the Workgroup:

Sue Odekirk, PacifiCorp, asked if an EPA Screening Value of 0.3 based on the fish consumption of adult males, is adequate or could cause a loss of locations in the screening process. The response from the DOH is that the Maximum Risk Level (MRL) has a 10 fold safety factor embedded in the value, so thus far there have been no observable losses.

Jeff Salt, Great Salt Lake Keeper asked if the maximum consumption rate was suitable for pregnant woman. The response from the DOH is that pregnant woman and children are considered high risk.

Bruce Waddell, Private Duck Club, asked if an EPA Screening Value of 0.3 is driven by the most sensitive individuals. The response from the DOH was that the Maximum Risk Level (MRL) is based on a study of the neurological changes in children.

8. Presentation by EG&G, on Mercury Emissions from Mustard Gas Incineration

A presentation by EG&G was given on the Mustard Destruction Campaign at the Tooele Chemical Agent Disposal Facility. A brief summary will be provided below and the presentation is posted at this web address:

http://www.deq.utah.gov/Issues/Mercury/docs/050906_Tooele_CADF_Mustard_Destruction_Campaign.pdf

The Deseret Chemical Depot is one of nine U.S chemical agent stockpile facilities with the largest percentage of chemical weapons. The chemical weapons are to be destroyed as specified in the Chemical Weapons Convention Treaty of 1997. Mustard, a blistering agent, is stored in ton containers, some of which have appreciable mercury levels. The Depot is destroying the Mustard in ton containers with low levels of mercury while installing a Sulfur

Impregnated Carbon Filtration system to treat the ton containers with elevated (greater than 1 ppm) levels of Mercury.

9. Proposed Agenda Items for September 28, 2006 meeting:

Presentation by Jason Schull on Assessment of Mercury in Human Hair

Presentation by an advocacy group on Nevada Air Emissions

Update on fish sampling program

Possible Utah 303(d) listing for the Great Salt Lake

Synopsis of the research proposal for the Great Salt Lake

Revisit goals

Other agenda items will be added as needed.